



## SPIT TOBACCO

Spit tobacco, or smokeless tobacco, comes in two forms: moist snuff and chew. Snuff is a finely ground tobacco and is usually placed between the bottom lip and gum and held there. This is also referred to as “dipping”. Chewing tobacco is shredded tobacco leaves placed between the cheek and gum.

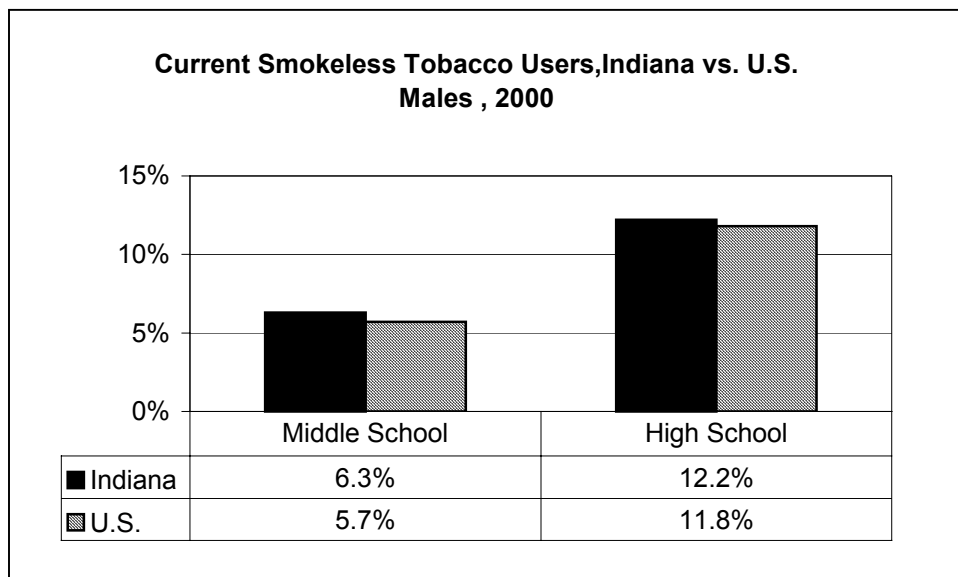
**Spit tobacco contains 3,000 chemicals**, 28 of them have been identified as cancer-causing agents. Some of these chemicals include:

<b>Formaldehyde</b>	Nicotine	Arsenic	Cadmium	Polonium-210
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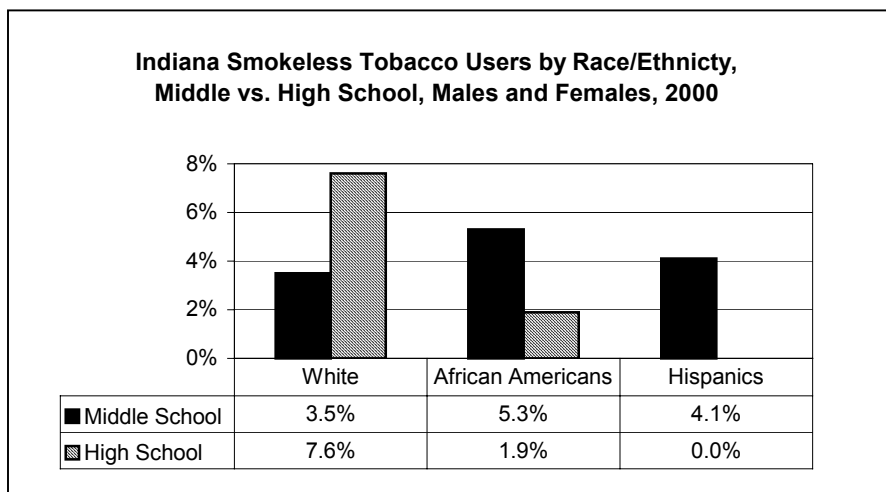
Holding one pinch of spit tobacco in your mouth for 30 minutes gives the **same amount of nicotine as smoking 4 cigarettes**.

1999 U.S. data shows that 22% of adults currently use spit tobacco compared to the 1998 data that shows approximately 15% Hoosier adults are current users. Men are primary users of this form of tobacco; a majority of spit tobacco users are young men. Six percent (6%) of Indiana’s middle school boys reported current use of some form of smokeless tobacco. This rate doubled for high school males with 12% current users.

**Current Smokeless Tobacco Users, Indiana vs. U.S., Males, 2000.** (right): Indiana males have slightly higher rates of smokeless tobacco use than U.S. males. Also as youth age their use of spit tobacco increases.



Spit tobacco use rates vary by race/ethnicity with more White youth, males and females, reporting use in high school and more African American youth reporting use during middle school years.



**Indiana Smokeless Tobacco Users by Race/Ethnicity, Middle vs. High School, 2000.**  
(left):

White youth have the highest smokeless tobacco use among high school students, with African Americans with the highest rate among middle school youth, higher also than African American high school students.

Due to increased marketing efforts sales and use of spit tobacco products has risen in the last decade. The 1997 report to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) indicated that advertising of smokeless tobacco products was more than \$130 million annually.

There are many negative effects including bad breath, spitting and stained teeth. Spit tobacco is not a safe alternate to cigarettes and is responsible for numerous health problems. People who use spit tobacco are at risk of many health problems including:

● **Cancers:** lip, esophagus, pharynx, larynx, pancreas and stomach. Users of spit tobacco are 50 times more likely to get oral cancer than non-users. These cancers can form within only 5 years of regular spit tobacco use.

● **Mouth diseases:** Leukoplakia, a disease of the mouth characterized by white patches and oral lesions on the cheeks, gums, and tongue. Studies show that 60-78% of spit tobacco users have oral lesions. During the first 3 years of use, leukoplakia occurs in more than half of smokeless tobacco users. Spit tobacco also causes gum recession increasing risk of cavities.

● **Heart diseases:** Spit tobacco increases the risk of heart attack and other heart disease as the nicotine constricts veins leading to heart problems and high blood pressure.

**For more information about spit tobacco and its harmful effects  
check out these websites and document sources:**

[http://dccps.nci.nih.gov/TCRB/less\\_default.html](http://dccps.nci.nih.gov/TCRB/less_default.html)  
[http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/rr\\_smokeless\\_tobacco.html](http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/rr_smokeless_tobacco.html)  
<http://tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0194.pdf>  
<http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/spit.htm>

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